



# Whittier Union

## HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

*To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...*

### NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Sept. 19, 2023    **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia    **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

## **Whittier Union Senior Honored with Award of Merit for Outstanding Leadership, Perseverance**

**WHITTIER** – Pioneer High School senior Christian Figueroa has always valued the importance of in-person connections, which motivated him to become a highly involved student and participate in multiple extracurricular activities and sports – all while maintaining a 4.41 GPA.

During his time at Pioneer High, Figueroa has excelled academically, taking seven honors courses, 10 Advanced Placement classes and a dual-enrollment course at Río Hondo College. For his academic accomplishments and his commitment to learning, Figueroa was honored with an Award of Merit by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees during a meeting on Sept. 12.

“Thank you to the Board and Pioneer High for selecting me to receive this honor, it is truly humbling,” Figueroa said. “I owe so much to my family, friends, teachers, coaches, and mentors who have supported and encouraged me, and have been there for me every step of the way. Attending Pioneer High has been an incredible journey. I've been pushed to challenge myself, while also being given the support I needed to do well. I am very grateful for my time as a Titan, and I know that Pioneer has prepared me for college and beyond.”

Figueroa's parents, who immigrated to the United States from a small town in Peru and pursued advanced degrees, continually instilled in him the value of a quality education. Early on in his life, they also enrolled him in piano classes, hoping to expand his skills in academics and the arts.

Figueroa's involvement at Pioneer High has extended beyond the classroom and into the athletic arena, as he joined the swim and water polo teams in his sophomore year. In his junior year, Figueroa played a pivotal role in leading the relay team to the CIF finals. His passion for music also continued as he joined the Titan Band and Jazz Band, where he excelled and eventually secured the spot as drum captain.

Using his swimming skills, Figueroa worked as a Los Angeles County lifeguard during the summer, teaching swim lessons to children and adults and conducting water exercise classes. Additionally, Figueroa participated in the highly selective Hispanic Scholarship Fund Young Leaders Summit program, a weeklong summer program where he learned from college mentors and interacted with other high-achieving students from across the nation.

“Christian is a scholar, role model and a true leader,” Principal Mary Chapman said. “His journey embodies the heights that students can achieve when they commit themselves to growth and service.”

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As Figueroa prepares for college, he is setting his sights on a future that focuses on his passions, including physics, music and education. He plans to major in physics, with aspirations of conducting research and becoming a university educator and will continue focusing on music – with the goal of playing in a band after graduation.

“On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we want to congratulate Christian on his tremendous story of perseverance and achievement,” Board President Jaime López said. “Each school year, we present a monthly Award of Merit to a student from each of our schools who demonstrates that they are truly doing *Whatever It Takes* to ‘Achieve and Maintain Excellence.’ We wish Christian all the best as he pursues his academic and personal goals after graduation.”

### PHOTO CAPTION

**WUHSD\_AWARD1:** The Whittier Union Board of Trustees present an Award of Merit to Pioneer High School senior Christian Figueroa during a meeting on Sept. 12, celebrating him for his academic accomplishments and commitment to learning.

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#### OUR MISSION:

The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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